

## Can You Dig It?

By Schann Nelson  
OSU Extension Service Master Gardener



I've had occasion over the last month to appreciate the darker side of the circle of life. In the process, I've come to more fully understand the therapeutic value of really physical work. No wonder more and more people are depressed! It's actually unusual, for most of us, to have to dig a deep hole or haul water from the creek or heat an un-insulated house. Especially if you must accomplish these things in order to survive

and with only hand tools. While I'm not advocating a return to an unrealistically idealized way of life (The facts of disease, starvation, and economics are not appealing!), purposeful necessary work is often missing in today's modern world.

This disconnect between the real, physical world and the protected environment where we live allows us, as a society, to ignore the demands of maintaining a complex ecosystem. Even in a rural community, like Vernonia, children still believe that milk and eggs come from cartons. If you are still reading, you are a part of bridging that gap for, no matter how small, any kind of garden is created at the intersection between the inside and outside worlds.

It's not too late to sign up for Master Gardener classes. It really doesn't matter how much experience you have, or don't have. Most important are the enthusiasm and available time to commit to an all day class every Monday, and the ability to "pay back" the community. The program is funded through the Oregon State University Extension Service and local participants pay only for the materials (and there are a LOT of materials) provided. The "pay back" is 70 hours of participation in educational and community activities. This is the cheapest way to get college level training in many, many aspects of gardening and horticulture. If you are interested, call the OSU Extension office in St. Helens, 503-397-3462, to request an application.

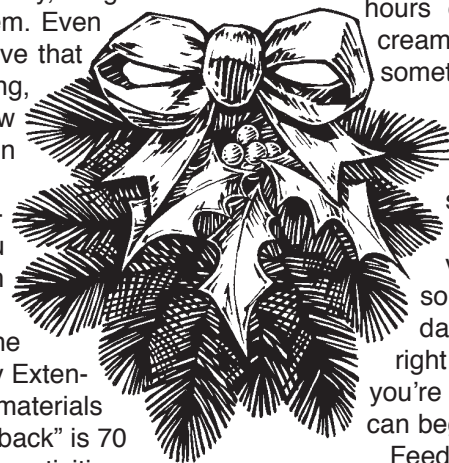
Note: The Columbia County class is small, about 30 folks, and you can really get to know the others in your class and the instructors, as well as our local Extension Agent Chip Bubl (an opportunity that should not be missed, since he'll be retiring some day). Additionally, if you are enrolled in the Columbia County class, you can still attend some of your classes in Washington County to make them up. They're not nearly as much fun though!

Another good thing about my recent experience of digging a really big hole, is that it has greatly increased my confidence in the ability to dig the holes to plant and move shrubs around. In comparison, moving the heather so that it's not blocking the garden path will be a snap. And the prospect of installing that dreamed-of pond and waterway doesn't seem quite so daunting.

I've actually been able to do some yard work this month. I've applied, not one but TWO, coats of copper fungicide to the fruit

trees, an absolute FIRST for me. In our damp, temperate climate, reducing the proliferation of fungus diseases is about as good as it gets. They certainly aren't going to go away. I'll be happy to settle for healthy trees without new diseased limbs every year. I've also planted 75 King Alfred daffodils out by the road (though I need to haul some more leaves from the back to mulch them with) that should provide a nice display in the spring. Some day, the hedge between my house and the road will also have a good display of forsythia, but I'm still trying to propagate enough forsythia plants to displace the snowberry. I've seen snowberry that looks pretty in the winter (there are a couple nice ones along the Linear Park) but it doesn't get enough sun in my yard and is just a scraggly invasive weed.

Gifts for gardeners: gift certificates, garden journal, gloves (my current favorite, made by Turf King, is a light-weight nylon glove with nitrile coated palm and fingers), stainless steel tools from hand spades to shovels (with the appropriate price range, but they do shed clay better than anything else), a certificate promising 'x' hours of help in the yard, hand soaps and creams. The list is endless. Be creative, it's something gardeners tend to appreciate.



Stuff to do: Apply lime now if you haven't done so for the last couple of years, plant bulbs, landscape trees and shrubs, spread no more than 1.5 pounds of wood ash per 100 square feet on the vegetable garden, check container plants so they don't dry out and protect from cold damage, turn the compost pile (yeah, right!), if the lawn if frozen stay off it! While you're actually accomplishing this last task, you can begin planning next year's garden.

Feed the birds, especially provide water if the temperature is below freezing during the daylight hours. Take a good look at the structure of your garden, enjoy the different colors, textures and smell of winter. Spend some time studying your trees before you begin pruning. Listen to the wind.

May you have peace and joy throughout the holidays and the coming year.

## Time to join in class for Master Gardeners

Home gardeners in Columbia County with a thirst for more gardening knowledge, and a willingness to pass that knowledge on to others, can still join the Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener program.

The Master Gardener program is designed to teach volunteers how to make better use of their gardening resources and abilities. They, in turn, teach others. Volunteers are given training in soil management, vegetable gardening techniques, landscape maintenance, pest control, and many other aspects of gardening. Then during the gardening season, these new Master Gardeners help to teach others to do a better job of growing and caring for plants, fighting off pests, and making our communities a better place to live.

Classes are held for ten consecutive weeks in St. Helens, beginning in January, on Mondays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The first class will be January 10. There is a fee of \$50 for reference materials.

For more information, call the OSU Extension office in St. Helens, 503-397-3462.

## Church Directory

### VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Grant Williams, Pastor  
957 State Avenue  
Vernonia, 503 429-6790  
Sunday Breakfast 9:00 a.m.  
Morning Worship 9:45 a.m.  
\*B.L.A.S.T. w/Nursery 10:00 a.m.  
\*Bible Learning and Scripture Training  
Wednesday  
Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

### CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Jeff Cheney, Branch President  
1350 E. Knott Street  
Vernonia, 503 429-7151  
Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m.  
Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m.  
Relief Society, Priesthood and  
Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.

### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

John Cahill, Pastor  
359 "A" Street  
Vernonia, 503 429-1161  
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Evening Worship  
Saturday, 6:00 p.m.

### NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH

Gary Taylor, Pastor  
Grant & North Streets  
Vernonia, 503 429-5378  
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Nursery available  
Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

### ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Pastoral Associate Juanita Dennis  
960 Missouri Avenue  
Vernonia, 503 429-8841  
Mass Schedule  
Sunday 12:00 Noon  
Religious Education  
Sunday 10:30 a.m.

### VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Sam Hough, Evangelist  
410 North Street  
Vernonia, 503 429-6522  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Every Wednesday:  
Ladies' Bible Study 9:30 a.m.  
Ladies' Worship 10:00 a.m.  
Children's Choir 3:00 p.m.  
Family Bible Study 6:30 p.m.

### SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Kevin Reiner, Pastor, 543-2254  
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St.  
Vernonia, 503 429-8301  
Sabbath School 9:15 a.m.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.  
Prayer Meeting, Wed. 7:00 p.m.

### ST. AUGUSTINE (CANTERBURY) EPISCOPAL CHURCH

375 North St. (Vernonia Grange Hall)  
Vernonia, 503 795-2173  
Sunday Services 10:00 a.m.

### VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH

850 Madison Avenue  
Vernonia, 503 429-1103  
Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.  
Children's Sunday School

### ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Darwin Harvey, Pastor  
662 Jefferson  
Vernonia, 503 429-4615  
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.  
Bible Study, Wednesday 7:00 p.m.  
Youth & Kids, Thursday 7:00 p.m.

## VALLEY VETERINARY CLINIC



# RABIES SPECIAL \$850

Thursdays 10 am - 5 pm

58376 Nehalem Hwy. S. Vernonia (Near Sunnyside Cafe)